



OFFICE OF
EZELL BROWN
SHERIFF/NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

May 7, 2015

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *Ex Parte* Communication
WC Docket No. 12-375; Inmate Calling Services

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am the Sheriff of Newton County, Georgia. The Newton County Sheriff's Office hereby files an *ex parte* communication in connection with the above-referenced proceeding. The Newton County Sheriff's Office supports the comments and reply comments filed by the National Sheriffs' Association in this proceeding. The purpose of this filing is to submit additional information specific to this office in support of NSA's position that Sheriffs must be allowed to recover their costs if ICS services are to continue to be widely available in jails.

Inmate calling is a discretionary service in our jail and it is allowed for the benefit of inmates and their families. If we are not permitted to recover the costs associated with the provision of ICS service, we will not be ripping the phones off the walls, but we will be forced to significantly limit access to inmate phones in our jail. Today our Detention Center houses approximately 435 inmates. Currently, we have the resources to allow significant access to ICS service and inmates are able to make calls 15 hours per day. In the month of March, inmates made 11,826 telephone calls. The number of hours of recorded conversations in March were 2,325 which equals 75 hours every day seven days a week. Today we have 9 officers that routinely monitor calls every day for 15 hours.

Denying payments to jails or restricting such payments to levels that do not at least cover our costs, will limit our ability to continue to allow ICS in this manner. If we do not receive compensation for our officer time to monitor calls to protect the public we will have no choice but to reduce the availability of our phones to less than 6 hours each day. We must have officers available to listen to phone calls to prevent this type of tragedy, criminal activity and the resolution of cases.

Our budget has been cut in recent years and it has not kept pace with our cost to operate in recent years. If the cost of allowing ICS must compete with all other budget needs, it

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may not be funded. However, if the cost of allowing ICS has its own source of funding, it is less likely to be impacted by the budget process.

Accordingly, Sheriffs incur significant costs in allowing ICS in jails and Sheriffs must be allowed to recover their costs to be able to continue to allow ICS and to encourage the deployment of ICS in jails.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.
Thank you for your efforts to resolve this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ezell Brown", written over a large, faint watermark of the Newton County Sheriff's Office logo.

Sheriff Ezell Brown
Newton County, Georgia

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